



Meditation:

Jesus, the Nourisher and sustainer:

Mark 6:30-42

Before you go through this meditation, I am appealing that you first read the above mentioned scriptural portion. From your reading you could have



discovered that Jesus and his disciples were faced with the food crisis. They were surrounded by a multitude of people, it was at the desert and it was getting darker (v.35). There was no way that these people could get food. This was a place without viable a life support system. It was a place of dislocation and frustration. However, our text depicts Jesus as someone who defies and overrides the overwhelming experience of dislocation and frustration by miraculously providing food to this crowd. He became the nourisher and sustainer of this crowd. The desert became a place of sustaining presence. Indeed Jesus is the bread from heaven (John 6:23).

This miracle reminds us of the wilderness narrative in Exodus 16-18 in which YAHWEH is portrayed as one who sustains and nourishes his people. The gift of bread, meat and water in the wilderness indicates that the fruitfulness of creation disrupted by Pharaoh has been restored. The creator God has the capacity to sustain his people everywhere in his creation, even in the wilderness. These words are to become the source of inspiration in whatever circumstances we are in. Our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ is God who nourishes and sustains his people. During these times of economic meltdown in which businesses are closing down and ministries are cutting down their activities, we are called to fix our eyes to the nourisher and sustainer. We will realize the vision of MMD no matter what because He is Emmanuel.

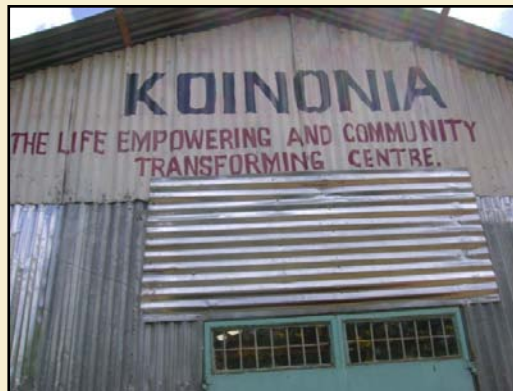
By Rev. Tshililo Liphadzi

A Truly Empowering and Community Transforming Centre

I wrote this story from my guesthouse room in Nairobi after a thought-provoking visit to Koinonia Baptist Church in Ruaka, a community which is about 20 minutes drive outside Nairobi. When you enter this community, which is part of the Kikuyu land, you are greeted with the richness of the land. I saw many food crops at their best in this community such as maize, beans, tomatoes, cabbages, etc.



However when I get into the heart of the community, I was greeted by the abject poverty in which this community is subjected to. It was indeed a mind-boggling experience. I could not believe my eyes. Tears dropped from my eyes,



as I asked myself hard questions: Why this, Lord? Why abject poverty in the land of plenty? Where did Africa go wrong?

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However, after the church service and discussions with church leadership and a group of MMD students who are busy with the *Pastoral Guidance and Counseling in HIV and AIDS* course, my hope was restored and I could see that God is indeed working in his own subtle way in this community.

This group of MMD students played a skit showing how the Christian church should interrupt the forces that promote ignorance about HIV/AIDS in the community. They have exposed Christian hypocrisy that has promoted the destruction of our communities. Their skit has reminded me and confirms the truth that as African Christians we are to go back to the basics, i.e., the true teaching of the Word of God. This should become the burden of every African church leader. As Africans, we are to remind ourselves that it is the discovery of the power of the gospel in the missionary schools by our national leaders such as Nelson Mandela, Jomo Kenyatta, Kenneth Kaunda, etc., that had led them to struggle for political freedom of the African people.

Rev. Bernard Kabaru Mwangi took the MMD delegation into the community. He shared with us the challenges he is facing and how he is trying to deal with those challenges. One of the challenges he is facing in this community is the growing landlessness of the indigenous people. In the next few years, he sees the indigenous people living as squatters in their own community. Business people are coming in with money buying the land for housing investment. The local people do not have a stake in those investments. Consequently he has a vision as a community leader to empower the community through education on how they should understand themselves and their context/ community and then shape their future in obedience to God. This is how he sees that the community can be transformed. The vision of their church is: The life empowering and community transforming centre. They describe their church as a church where everybody is somebody. I have experienced that. It is the mission of MMD Global and its regions to empower local churches to become life empowering and community transforming centres for the transformation of our continent.

Our God creates, sustains and commands. He is the source of our hope.

By Rev. Tshililo Liphadzi...National Coordinator of MMDSA

Achieving the Vision

This begins with a quotation by one African leader, "Africa is suffering because of the vacuum of leadership, we are living in leadership starvation". We will be in a process of achieving our vision when we see African leaders changing and its people standing for what benefits everyone, and not just the privileged few.

Fortress of Hope (Durban)

Elesinah's class is about to start in Fortress of Hope Ministries, Durban, led by Pastor Bheki Mchunu. We have ten people registered to become students for *Practical Christianity*.

Free Methodist Church (Mpumalanga)

As per the request from the church, Elesinah went to present MMD's vision at the church in FMC conference which took place during Easter in Mpumalanga. Elesinah is barely able to express, due to her excitement, the manner in which she was received. "I only expected to speak for one hour, but you know what, they gave me time from 9am – 1pm". Many seeds are ready to plant. Elesinah is making plans to establish the class there which she believes will be a vibrant one. Praise be to God because wherever MMD is being introduced, God opens the eyes of the people to see its impact.

Back to Zimbabwe

Rev. Liphadzi and Dr. Chauke took a trip to Zimbabwe where they spent three days marketing MMD. Leaders from local churches expressed big interest in MMD. There is continuous communication aiming at establishing a working relationship and, ultimately, a class in Zimbabwe.



MMD students at Tshidzini Village, Limpopo, who did research in their own community.

Popular perceptions about the nature of HIV/AIDS

MMD's philosophy of education is to take students to the community and do research in the community. In this short article I want to share with you the results the students came back with on the research they were asked to do on the perception that different people have on the nature of HIV/AIDS. Students were asked to go and meet with different members of the community (Tshidzini Village) and find out their perception about HIV/AIDS. They met with traditional healers, nurses and other members of the community. Students, from their research findings, discovered that there are members of the community who believe that HIV is caused by the family-planning injections that women get from the clinics. There is also a belief among community members that lubrication fluid in the condoms also infects people with HIV. The most commonly held belief is that there is no such disease as HIV/AIDS; all people who are accused of being sick as a result of HIV/AIDS are sick as a result of witchcraft. There are members of the community who believe that SMS that people receive in their cell phones can infect people with HIV. How can that happen? It is not explained.

There are people who strongly believe that if they have sex with an infected person, they cannot be infected if they take a shower or bath after intercourse.

I am sharing with you this story to show you that the war that we are fighting is not merely a medical war, it is more a worldview war. That is the reason we need the MMD programmes in our communities, which are geared towards engaging and changing the worldviews of our people about themselves as well as the challenges they are facing in their daily lives. This is the fight that we need to fight with the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ.

The more I think of this challenge, I keep on remembering Paul's words in Romans 12.2: *Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is—his good, pleasing and perfect will.* ^[1]

^[1]The New International Version, (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House) 1984.

Why sacrifice and commitment to MMD?

When two elephants are fighting, it's the grass that suffers, and when parents are fighting, children suffer. Our continent has always been in conflicts that are either political, tribal or religious. When such conflicts break out, innocent people suffer.

Ironically, in every community there is a church and everyone in the community is connected to church in one way or another. If church leaders can occupy the "front seat" in resolving those conflicts, taking part in all peace resolution efforts, no doubt Africa can be a better continent to live in. The unfortunate part is that church leaders are not equipped to lead communities but to lead only in church halls. This is where MMD becomes vital. If one individual can't do it alone, let's join hands and do it together.

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Learning Never Ceases



From left: Andre, Tshililo, John, Mashudu and Angelica

In 2008 MMD Global received an invitation to the 30th anniversary of Entrust. In its excom meeting in Burundi in March 2009, the Excom asked Dr Chitlango and Rev. Tshililo Liphadzi to attend the anniversary as representatives of MMD Global and as staff members of Entrust. We had the privilege to take our wives to this anniversary in Sopron, Hungary. It was also a time to reflect on our lives and families together.

We are so thankful for all the people who were involved in the preparations of this trip, such Wendall Hollis and Nancy Lindgren. There are many lessons that we have learned from the anniversary which will help us in charting the way forward for MMD Global.

Here are some of the lessons that I want to share with you:

- *We are to be people who believe in humble beginning. This calls us to have faith in God, that though we have this humble beginning as MMD, God can accomplish his goals through us in amazing ways. We may be surprised to see how God has used MMD after 30 years.*
- *We are to take risks in order to accomplish what God has put in our hearts. It will not come on a silver plate, but with our tears and sweat, and sometime with our blood. We should not be hindered by the lack of finances to accomplish the vision of MMD.*
- *We should not look down on ourselves and feel ashamed of what we are doing. We are doing a great job for God's kingdom that other people around the world are amazed to hear about—that it is from Africa, and it is developed by Africans for Africans.*
- *There is much that Entrust can learn from us. We are to view ourselves as equal members of the body of Christ, who can equally enrich and empower each other.*

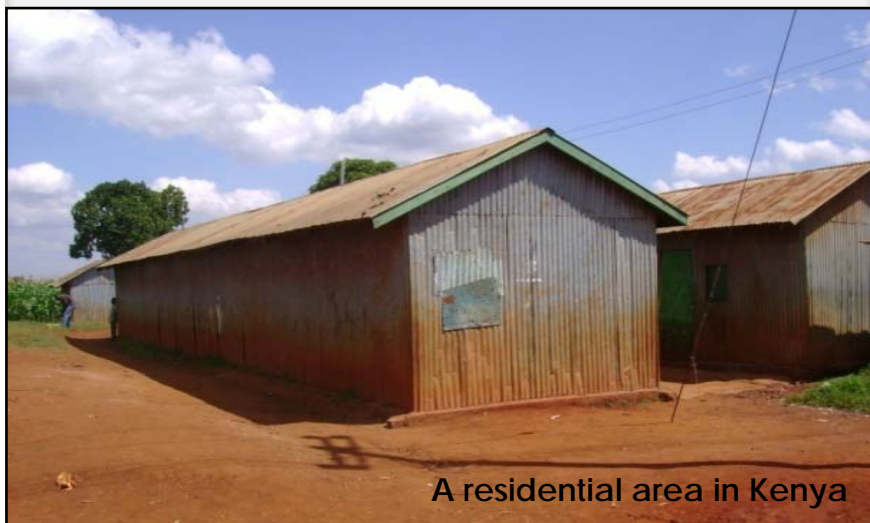
Rev. and Mrs. Nefefe

These two individuals are a blessing to MMD. Every time Elesinah goes to her class in Venda, they accommodate and provide her with all her necessities. It is through their support we are able to victoriously fight all the challenges facing that class. These are true servants of God; they have made their home a place of rich hospitality. We appreciate all their support and pray for more blessings in their family.

MMD is a tool that enables people who are burdened by the leadership crisis in Africa to heal the wounds of the past and create a healthy environment in communities in which they live.

It's only an incompetent leader that blames congregations for the failures of the congregation, or it is an incompetent man that blames his family for the failures of his family. All the disorders that you see around can still be rectified, only if you take action.

You probably belong to a local church. It is the task of that church to work hard for the transformation of their communities. Have you ever thought millions of people dying in some of the African countries is a man-made tragedy that could have been avoided if local churches were working tirelessly for the transformation of their communities?



A residential area in Kenya

Governing Body

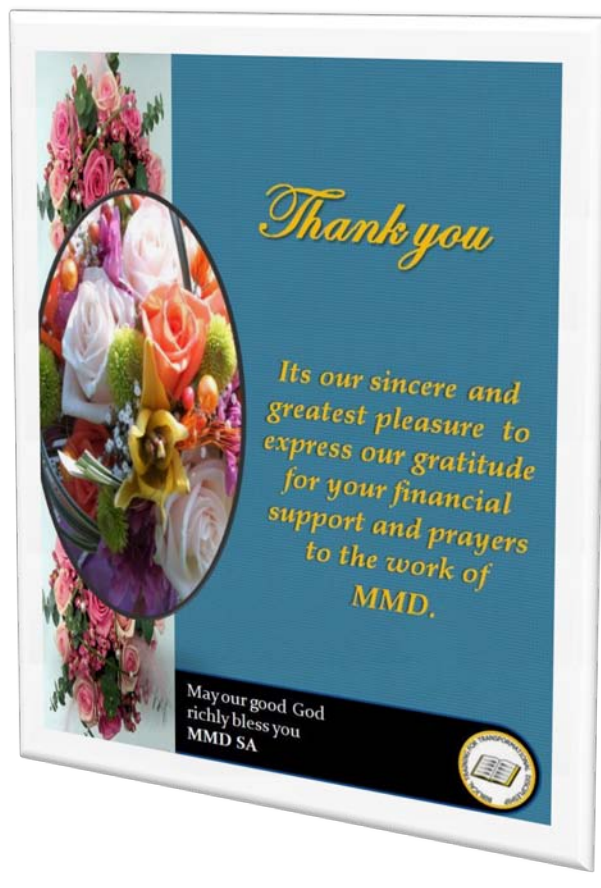
- Chairperson : Rev. Nefefe MS
- Deputy : Rev. Magodi T
- Secretary : Rev. Lekalakala MJ
- Treasurer : Mr Kewana P
- Other members : Dr. Ravhudzulo A,
Dr Rajwili M, Mr Dlepuma S.

Learning Centres

- Kurhuleni (Daveyton & Thembisa)** - Elesinah
- Witbank** - Elesinah
- Pretoria** - Elesinah
- Venda** - Elesinah
- Venda (Tshidzini)** - Tshililo
- Durban** - Elesinah

Thanks to Donors

For the period April to June we have managed to raise R850 through local Donations. We are so thankful to you all who gave towards the work of God through MMD.



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